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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 20th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TEIRLINCK (Belgium)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 114: UNITED NATIONS COMMON SYSTEM (continued) (A/49/30, A/49/480; A/C.5/49/7 and A/C.5/49/10)

1. Mrs. LAVNICK-WAINSTEAD (Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations) said that in response to the urging of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA) had decided to resume participation in the work of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). The Chairman of ICSC had agreed, for his part, to review the revised methodology used to determine General Service salaries at Headquarters and field duty stations. Encouraged by the Chairman of the Commission, FICSA had submitted a detailed analysis that had clearly demonstrated the arbitrary and technically questionable rationale for those revisions. However, at the Commission's fortieth session, in July 1994, FICSA, whose contribution was summarized in paragraph 201 of the report of the International Civil Service Commission (A/49/30), had been met by a complete lack of cooperation on the part of some members of the Commission, who were well aware that such an about-face would compromise the resumption of dialogue. The campaigning in the run-up to the election of a new chairman and several members of the Commission had had an impact on the Commission's substantive work and on its recommendations. In the face of that turnaround it was more than likely, therefore, that, when it met in February 1995, the Council of FICSA, weary of the one-sided dialogue, would decide to revert to its previous policy of non-cooperation. FICSA had communicated its views to the Administrative Committee on Coordination, whose frustration with the Commission mirrored FICSA's own.

2. The Commission had made no progress on items relating to Professional salaries, despite general recognition of the fact that those salaries were no longer competitive. Further details were contained in paragraphs 12-17 of FICSA's submission under agenda item 114, advance copies of which had been distributed at that meeting. The original idea of ICSC as an impartial, technical body had proved to be a pipedream; FICSA as well as a number of the administrations of common system organizations had been criticizing the Commission for many years. The difficulties in identifying a suitable number of qualified candidates, the need for geographical distribution, political pressure exerted by certain Member States and the ever-widening gap between levels of understanding of individual members had all contributed to make the Commission an uncohesive and dysfunctional body; the Commission barely tolerated the presence of representatives of staff and organizations, and merely gave them a token hearing. Any convergence of opinions which appeared in the Commission's report for 1994 was purely fortuitous.

3. While acknowledging the necessity of an intermediary, independent, technical body, FICSA, like others, had concluded that ICSC, which refused to engage in any self-examination, no longer fitted the bill. It therefore proposed that a tripartite task force composed of representatives of the General Assembly, the administrations and staff, be set up, without delay, and given the

task of identifying the most appropriate forum for consideration of conditions of service in the common system. FICSA was, however, prepared to consider alternative solutions which would take into account everyone's point of view.

4. There were a number of arguments in support of a complete overhaul of ICSC. In recent years, the Commission had made a number of serious errors which had been the subject of successful appeals by staff. Such situations would be far less likely to arise if there were a tripartite body, that included staff representatives and formulated recommendations by consensus. Furthermore, the General Assembly would have the assurance that all aspects of, and all points of view on, an issue had been taken into consideration. A tripartite body would be more cost-effective, both in terms of the regular budget and because there would be fewer appeals. The balance of power in a tripartite body would guarantee its independence and impartiality, and would allow the General Assembly to take decisions on the basis of a negotiated compromise. A more participatory process would help re-establish confidence amongst staff and administrations. The improvements suggested by FICSA did not require any major revision of policies or programmes.

5. With regard to the substance of the recommendations made by ICSC, FICSA objected to the changes made to the methods used to determine the salaries of staff in the General Service and related categories. Those changes challenged the Flemming principle and, if not promptly addressed, could distort the outcome of salary surveys, and prejudice staff interests. FICSA was aware of the financial constraints of Member States, and was not seeking an upward revision of General Service salaries. On the other hand, it could not accept a downward revision of salaries, which was the real objective, when workloads were being increased. In Rome, staff had had no option but to go on strike for two days in order to protest against the new methodology, and in Geneva, staff had decided not to participate in the next salary survey, and might feel the need to give voice to their protest should the surveys proceed according to schedule.

6. In the document which had been distributed, FICSA had raised a number of other issues, particularly that of the protection of locally recruited staff in hazardous duty stations, and had made a number of suggestions. She drew particular attention to the paragraphs in italics. FICSA's requests were by no means excessive; they had been made in a desire to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations by enhancing staff motivation and dedication.

7. Mr. ABOU-ZAHR (Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA)) said that relations between ICSC and staff representatives had been, at the very least, strained for several years. If CCISUA had not withdrawn from the work of the Commission, despite pressure from some of its members, it was only because it believed that certain political realities could not be ignored, and that near paralysis was inevitable during the run-up to an election. However, CCISUA considered that ICSC was exceeding its mandate by systematically trying to anticipate the wishes of the Fifth Committee, and that it was no longer fulfilling its statutory obligations as a technical body. That explained why it had lost credibility among the

staff, and why its paralysis provoked discontent among staff and organizations alike. The purpose of ICSC was to detect the real problems and to give technical advice on what corrective measures should be taken.

8. Noting that he would confine his remarks to procedural issues, he said that the text of the Commission's report for 1994 was not the one that the Commission had adopted at its fortieth session. Long passages, reflecting what were essentially minority opinions, had been added, changing the general balance of the debates, while interventions that had been supported by several members had been compressed and diluted by the introduction of comments made later in the debate. Furthermore, the report mentioned - in the discussion section - a substantive question which had been raised at the decision-making phase of the debate. That approach to report writing undermined the trust in the Commission that was essential for its proper operation.

9. Although it had been assured that the situation would not repeat itself, CCISUA intended to request the inclusion in the agenda of the Commission's spring 1995 session of an item dealing with those procedural issues. The need to create a collegial atmosphere that would allow an often not so vocal majority to express their views freely must be openly addressed. All members of the Commission should be able to speak freely and to have their views properly reflected in the Commission's reports.

10. CCISUA noted with disappointment that ICSC had been slow to act on the General Assembly's request that it review the application of the Noblemaire principle, and had even deferred examination of the question of the best paid national civil service on the pretext of changes in methodology. The Commission should rule on technical issues and leave political decisions to the competent bodies. Technical studies honestly researched were hard to dismiss, and a transparent approach was often the best argument.

11. The reluctance of General Service staff members to participate in the new round of salary surveys was an indication of their doubts about the Commission's impartiality and the soundness of the revised methodology. CCISUA intended to raise some additional technical points when some aspects of the revised methodology were considered at the Commission's next session.

12. With regard to the comments of the consulting actuary contained in paragraph 48 of the report of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (A/49/9) concerning the amounts used to determine the actuarial value of the Fund's assets, CCISUA believed that all assumptions must be taken into consideration and all cost elements accurately and openly reflected; it did not want suddenly to find that the benefits of future generations had been curtailed and that even those of persons who had already retired could not be afforded.

13. In the context of the essential changes that the Organization was undergoing in order to be able to fulfil its enlarged mandate, CCISUA supported the proposal that staff at decision-making levels dealing with the procurement of goods and services should declare their financial assets in order to avoid any possible conflict of interest. CCISUA considered that it had a duty to

participate in political and technical discussions and wished to be considered as a responsible participant in a dialogue allowing an honest look at problems with a view to correcting them.

AGENDA ITEM 108: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued) (A/49/6, A/49/16 (Parts I and II), A/49/99, A/49/135 and Add.1, A/49/301, A/49/310 and A/49/452; A/C.5/49/27; E/1994/4 and 19)

14. Ms. RODRIGUEZ ABASCAL (Cuba) said that effective programme planning was essential in order to ensure the best use of the Organization's resources; existing norms and regulations must be strictly applied. She regretted, therefore, that the Secretariat had not respected the rules concerning the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997. In violation of rule 103.2 of the rules and regulations for programme planning, as well as General Assembly resolution 37/234, the Secretariat had made revisions by interpreting in a selective manner the mandate entrusted to it, in such a way that all the proposed revisions served the interests of one group.

15. It appeared that some Main Committees had not taken decisions on the proposed revisions, contrary to the suggestion in paragraph 38 of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the second part of its thirty-fourth session (A/49/16, Part II). Under the circumstances, she did not see how the Fifth Committee could take a decision. The Chairmen of the Main Committees should be informed of their responsibilities for planning and programming.

16. Her delegation took note with interest of the report of the Secretary-General on the prototype of a new format of the medium-term plan (A/49/301). Intergovernmental consultations were essential, particularly concerning the programme framework and the order of priorities at the subprogramme level. The views of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions were also necessary. She could accept the programme framework proposed in document A/49/301 only if electoral assistance activities were maintained under the "political affairs" programme, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 47/214.

17. Her delegation attached great importance to the report of the Secretary-General on programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1992-1993 (A/49/135 and Corr.1). It shared the views expressed by the Committee for Programme and Coordination and deplored the low rate of implementation of development programmes under sections 15, 17, 19 and 45 of the programme budget, despite what the Secretary-General had to say on the matter in paragraph 14 of his report.

18. Her delegation noted with concern the proposal for negative growth submitted in the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 1996-1997 (A/49/310), since activities related to economic and social development deserved larger allocations of resources. The unequal increase in resources in the various chapters of the budget and the priorities indicated in paragraph 13 were also surprising. She did not favour the priorities being dictated by the

special interests of certain Member States; in any event, budget resources should be distributed in such a way as to enable the Organization to fulfil all the mandates entrusted to it; that should also be a primary concern when it came to adopting a new management style for the United Nations.

19. Mr. HANSON (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, returned to some aspects of the organizational and management reforms that appeared essential. He fully agreed that the Secretariat worked to serve all Member States and that the Organization was accountable to its Members; furthermore, with increased delegation, there must also be strengthened accountability.

20. The medium-term plan needed to be improved in order to be of greater use. It should be more closely connected to the budget, and activities and their goals should be defined in concrete terms, so that their output could be measured and compared with the projected results. Individual programme appropriations could also be shown.

21. The prototype of the medium-term plan, therefore, did not represent adequate progress: programme and subprogramme objectives should be more precisely defined, as should the priorities, otherwise the measurement of output would continue to consist merely of a listing of activities which would not permit their effectiveness to be measured.

22. Concerning the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 1996-1997 (A/49/310), Australia, Canada and New Zealand attached great importance to the principle of zero real growth. That principle assumed a reallocation of resources away from obsolete activities and those of marginal utility, and towards those of increasing importance. The Secretariat should rigorously examine non-essential activities (public information and administration and management in particular), with a view to redeploying resources to priority programmes (human rights, humanitarian assistance, preventive diplomacy, sustainable economic and social development).

23. The Secretary-General had done well to strive to implement the principle of zero real growth in his preliminary estimates of resources to be allocated for the biennium 1996-1997. However, that approach should be applied on the basis not of the appropriations for the biennium 1992-1993 but of actual expenditure, which was now known to amount to nearly $36 million less. Those savings should be factored into the 1994-1995 performance reports, as well as into the 1996-1997 programme budget outline, producing a total expenditure of $2,538,000,000 - an amount that should be treated as a maximum requirement in developing the detailed programme budget.

24. With regard to the programmes of the medium-term plan, programme 35 (Promotion and protection of human rights) was particularly deserving of the Committee's attention. On the whole, the proposed revisions, particularly those incorporated as a result of the World Conference on Human Rights, adequately reflected the changes in the legislative framework. The Committee should expeditiously approve the proposed revisions, because there could be no delay in

implementing decisions reached after such difficult negotiations, nor in the work of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Human rights activities should be considered a priority area for the reallocation of resources. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action implied a reorientation and expansion of the human rights programme. In the short term, that required the deployment of additional resources to the Centre for Human Rights and the Office of the High Commissioner. In the long term, however, increased cooperation and coordination should lead to focused, coherent and efficient action of all the organizations of the United Nations.

25. Lastly, Australia, Canada and New Zealand were pleased to see that the Secretary-General would identify separately, in a special section of the programme budget, the resources necessary for the effective operation of the Office of Internal Oversight.

26. Mr. WANG Xuexian (China) recalled that the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 was a guiding document resulting from long negotiations, and should be scrupulously respected in implementing programmes as well in establishing their budgets. Its guiding principles and priorities should not be modified and the allocation of the budget resources of the United Nations must preserve the intended balance between programmes in the area of peace and security, on the one hand, and those in the area of economic and social development on the other.

27. The proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 (A/C.5/49/27) touched on 23 of its 44 programmes and the modifications to such important programmes as Nos. 11, 21 and 35 were fundamental in nature. As such, they prompted some reflections on points of principle.

28. Every two years, certain revisions were made necessary by the evolution of the situation and of the needs of Member States. China supported the revisions proposed by the Secretariat when they fell within that category. However, revising programmes was a very serious task, which had to follow certain rules and be carried out strictly according to General Assembly resolutions and other instruments representing the will of the Member States. It had to be admitted that some of the proposed revisions deviated from that principle, such as those concerning programme 35, which deviated from the Vienna Declaration on Human Rights and its Plan of Action.

29. Regulation 3.12 of the rules and regulations governing programme planning, which set the procedure for reviewing the chapters of the medium-term plan, should logically also apply to the revision of programmes contained in that plan. However, some of the revisions had been submitted directly to the Committee without being reviewed by the bodies provided for under regulation 3.12, causing confusion and disorganization. All Member States were entitled to discuss on an equal footing the revisions proposed by the Secretariat, and to alter them if necessary, and it was neither desirable nor workable to refuse to allow them to do so.

AGENDA ITEM 105: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (A/49/16 (Part II), A/49/34, A/49/98, A/49/336, A/49/418, A/49/423, A/49/449, A/49/471, A/49/560, A/49/632; A/C.5/49/1, A/C.5/49/28)

30. Mr. MARTOHADINEGORO (Joint Inspection Unit) introduced the Unit's report entitled "Review and assessment of efforts to restructure the regional dimension of United Nations economic and social activities" (A/49/423). The Unit had already noted on several occasions how the regional commissions had contributed to economic and social development, both as a catalyst for it and as a stimulus for regional cooperation. The current objective was to analyse the restructuring of the United Nations economic and social sector: had it made the regional commissions' work more effective and efficient?

31. The question was a timely one, since the keys to solving the economic and social problems facing Governments were often found at the regional or global levels. The regional dimensions of United Nations activities should therefore respond better to the needs of Member States. The regional approach offered several advantages. Strengthened regional cooperation tended to create a climate of confidence and enhance progress; a regional approach often allowed more efficient use of the resources of the different countries concerned; and the existence of a variety of regional and subregional mechanisms not only allowed problems to be brought to their immediate attention, but also produced a quicker response than that from a global entity. For that reason, Governments were resorting more and more to regional arrangements, as demonstrated by those that existed or were planned, from Europe to Asia and the Pacific by way of North America and Africa.

32. In the light of a 1975 study and a number of General Assembly resolutions adopted thereafter, the report reviewed efforts to restructure the regional activities of the United Nations and explained why previous reforms had not been fully implemented and had therefore had a limited effect. The current restructuring exercise enjoyed two advantages in comparison with others: it was taking place in a much less confrontational climate and the Secretary-General was firmly committed to it.

33. However, progress had been limited for several reasons. First, the difficulty of restructuring an organization as enormous as the United Nations had not been foreseen. Second, the process of restructuring and revitalizing the Organization's intergovernmental machinery in the economic and social sectors remained unfinished, hampering the Secretary-General's efforts. Third, the Secretary-General had received no specific guidance for restructuring the economic and social sectors, as he had been given in the political sector. Fourth, Member States were less interested than before in restructuring the economic and social sectors, and the lack of intergovernmental dialogue explained why the current process was often being considered as a purely administrative exercise. Fifth, prior to the current restructuring exercise, no substantive analysis had been made of the complementarity of the functions of the various entities of the United Nations system both at and away from Headquarters, nor of that of future cooperation and coordination mechanisms, nor

of that of the activities carried out by regional commissions and non-United Nations regional agencies. Sixth, and lastly, no official had been made responsible, on a day-to-day basis, for all aspects of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors, especially as concerned their decentralization. The Secretary-General had asked the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to assist him in ensuring policy coherence and enhancing coordination in those sectors, but that would not be enough to replace such oversight.

34. The report contained seven recommendations aimed at accelerating the pace of the restructuring. Three of them were addressed to Member States. It seemed essential that Member States should reaffirm the need to give a further impetus to the restructuring and revitalization of the economic and social sectors. They would perhaps also favour providing the Secretariat with a strategic analysis and planning facility, which would supply input for the Secretary-General's decision-making process.

35. Three other recommendations were addressed to the Secretary-General. It was important to designate a senior official responsible for firmly implementing decisions relative to the restructuring process and for ensuring the coordination required. In the area of implementing General Assembly resolution 46/235, it was recommended that the Secretary-General should undertake discussions with the executive heads of the United Nations funding agencies on the most rational use and financing of the regional commissions' operational capacity. It would be necessary to consider seriously the possibility of greater involvement of those commissions as executing agencies of regional and subregional projects, and national projects with specific regional focus financed by those agencies.

36. The seventh recommendation was addressed to the regional commissions, which should concentrate on priority areas where they could make the most significant contribution and strive to become centres of excellence for specific activities in their respective regions.

37. Mr. BARIMANI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the Organization must constantly adapt to new challenges. Its restructuring was likewise an ongoing process whose impact on programme execution - which it ought to accelerate - should be carefully analysed.

38. The report on the restructuring of the United Nations Secretariat (A/49/336) had been established pursuant to resolution 48/218 in response to the concerns expressed by Member States during the forty-eighth session. It focused in particular on the impact of measures adopted at Headquarters and of the redeployments of certain activities both to and away from Headquarters. The objectives of the operation had been defined clearly but what remained unclear was its impact on the various departments and how resources would be apportioned among the various sectors. All programmes should be treated on an equal footing; unfortunately, the three departments in the economic and social sectors had not been treated in the same way, in terms of allocating human and financial

resources, as those created to deal with peace-keeping and political and humanitarian affairs.

39. His delegation welcomed the efforts of the Secretary-General to establish an integrated and streamlined Department of Administration and Management with clear lines of responsibility. While it also welcomed the newly established Office of Internal Oversight Services, it wished to emphasize that the provision of human and financial resources to that Office for the performance of its tasks should not be to the detriment of activities relating to development.

40. His delegation was not fully convinced that the Secretary-General was right in requesting the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to assist in enhancing policy coherence and coordination of operational activities. As the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) had noted, that important question should be considered by the relevant intergovernmental bodies. Furthermore, his delegation could not support the transfer of the Electoral Assistance Division to the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, as it did not accept the rationale behind that transfer and felt that the two activities were not necessarily linked.

41. Restructuring was a component of a whole system which also included the question of accountability and responsibility. In that regard, the system due to be put in place on 1 January 1995 should provide very clear guidelines for the supervision of programme managers and for assessing their performance. A clear division of responsibilities coupled with an effective penalty and incentive system would help to enhance efficiency and productivity. However, constant monitoring of the implementation of the system was required in order to guarantee its effectiveness.

42. Training was also a very important element and should not be limited to programme managers but extended to all staff members.

43. Lastly, the Secretary-General was right in setting up a high-level group of experts to review current procurement procedures. Indeed, on several occasions Member States had voiced their dissatisfaction with regard to that subject. It was to be hoped that the findings and recommendations of the group of experts would simplify the procedures and make them more transparent and would be made available to Member States.

44. Mr. OWADE (Kenya) said that the impression he gathered from the report of the Secretary-General on the restructuring of the Secretariat (A/49/336), which was not complete, and from other relevant reports (A/49/135 and Add.1 and Corr.1), was that the restructuring was adversely affecting programmes. Restructuring must not be an end in itself: its objective must be to improve programme delivery particularly with regard to the programmes relating to the recovery and development of Africa.

45. He welcomed the initiatives by the Secretary-General to strengthen the mechanisms for coordination between the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Department of Humanitarian

Affairs. He commended the measures put in place to strengthen the internal structures of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations in order to enable it to better plan, manage, direct and coordinate missions implemented world wide. While Member States should be encouraged to loan military officers to the Situation Centre at no cost to the Secretariat, he wondered whether consideration should not be given to reimbursing some of the expenses incurred by developing countries in order to enable them to continue that practice.

46. Concerning the strengthening of the United Nations presence in Nairobi, he took note of the Secretary-General's intention to enhance collaboration between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). That approach should "contribute to a more efficient use of scarce resources and more coherent management in both entities, and also provide the foundations for a stronger headquarters centre in Kenya and added visibility to the United Nations presence in Africa".

47. While he welcomed the Secretary-General's assurance that the two programmes would retain their distinct identity and programmatic focus, he felt that it would have been better if the Secretary-General had presented a full and comprehensive report spelling out clearly what the common support services included and their impact on programmatic aspects and the independence of the two organizations. In that regard, he suggested that the administrative arrangements being applied at other United Nations centres, namely Geneva and Vienna, should be applied, if need be, to Nairobi.

48. In addition to the savings, more resources should be allocated to UNEP and Habitat in order to enable them to carry out their respective mandates. With a view to ensuring that the services of the Centre were used at full capacity, he urged the Committee on Conferences to schedule more meetings to be held at Nairobi, especially in the areas of environment and human settlements. He also proposed that the secretariats of all conventions relating to the environment should be located at Nairobi so as to benefit from the expertise that UNEP had acquired over the years. Two objectives of restructuring would thus be achieved: avoiding duplication and reducing waste.

49. Regarding cooperation between UNEP and Habitat, he recalled that General Assembly resolution 48/176 had requested the Secretary-General in the context of ensuring high-level leadership to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) through distinct and separate management and direction to give full consideration to the views expressed by Member States regarding the leadership of the Centre, while resolution 48/218 had approved the appointment of the Executive Director of Habitat under the current approved senior management arrangement. The Executive Director was currently an Assistant Secretary-General and Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements; the Kenyan delegation urged the Secretary-General to appoint him at the level of Under-Secretary-General as soon as possible, in conformity with the wishes of Member States.

50. He welcomed the intention of the Secretary-General to develop a structure that could accommodate at Nairobi other long-term and temporary functions of the

Secretariat (information centre, offices of peace-keeping and other field missions, etc.). Discussions were already under way between the Government of Kenya and the Secretary-General regarding the conclusion of a special agreement to secure the smooth operation of such activities. He also welcomed the progress achieved with regard to the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II).

51. Mr. TUKURU (Nigeria) said that the tremendous expansion in the activities of the United Nations, which was carrying out many missions that might not have been envisaged when it was established, had a serious impact on its human and financial resources. It was therefore necessary for the administrative and financial structure of the Organization to be reviewed in order to ensure economy and efficiency. That would in turn encourage Member States to pay their contributions without preconditions.

52. He endorsed the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report on the establishment of a transparent and effective system of accountability and responsibility (A/C.5/49/1). The establishment of such a system was necessary and staff members of all categories must be held accountable for their actions. While he accepted the view that staff members who were given responsibilities to implement programmes must also be entrusted with the corresponding resources, it was essential to define the authority and responsibility clearly in order to avoid any duplication of duties.

53. His delegation also endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal to train programme managers and supervisors in areas connected with management development. It welcomed the fact that the training programme would be extended to the entire staff and hoped that field officers could benefit from it.

54. Recalling the statement by Uganda on 11 November 1994, he stressed the need to increase the human and financial resources earmarked for programmes and activities involving the economic recovery and development of Africa and the least developed countries. The staff of such operations should correspond to those in comparable United Nations operations.

55. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposal to introduce, on 1 January 1995, a new performance appraisal system which would apply to all staff. It was convinced that, by discussing and agreeing on work assignments and deadlines, management and staff would begin to engage in constructive dialogue, and teamwork would be encouraged.

56. He welcomed the establishment of the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the appointment of Mr. Paschke to the post of Under-Secretary-General. He was convinced that those steps would improve the management of the Organization.

57. His delegation noted with concern the observations of the Board of Auditors with regard to United Nations procurement methods and hoped that the Secretary-General would give due regard to the Board's recommendation that greater use should be made of open tenders for major procurements.

58. Mr. ELZIMAITY (Egypt) said that he endorsed the proposal, discussed by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) at its thirty-fourth session, to set up, as from 1 January 1995, a transparent and efficient system of accountability and responsibility. Nevertheless, the new system could only be successful if it had the support and cooperation of all those involved, which called for clarity and transparency. Accordingly, the objectives of each component of the system must be clearly defined, and any procedures introduced, including rewards and sanctions, must be "transparent".

59. The new system must give rise to an "informative management" which would keep Member States and staff informed of any measures taken by the Administration and thus inspire their confidence. Rapid communication of information and transparency were essential to the success of any system. In that connection, his delegation regretted that Member States had not been informed of the results of the investigation conducted by the Office of Inspections and Investigations into the financial "losses" suffered by one of the most important United Nations peace-keeping operations. It would like to be informed of any steps taken by the Secretariat to recover the funds involved and to prevent similar losses in the framework of other operations.

60. He agreed with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) that United Nations procurement procedures should be more impartial, transparent and open and should emphasize competition. He stressed the need for international bidding and more openness in contract evaluation. He also proposed that the Office of Internal Oversight Services should do a comprehensive review of the operational activities of the Field Operations Division. The Secretary-General had proposed the submission to the General Assembly of a new format for evaluation studies and programme and budget performance reports, to take effect during the biennium 1996-1997; in Egypt's view, intergovernmental discussion should first be held on that proposal.

61. His delegation reaffirmed its support for the restructuring process and the need to strengthen training for staff members in order to improve Secretariat services to Member States. At the same time, the objectives of the restructuring must be clearly defined and a time-frame established. At the CPC session, his delegation had been concerned by the negative impact of the restructuring process on the implementation of United Nations activities in the economic sector. Preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women could not, in themselves, explain the delays that had occurred. His delegation recalled that, before the adoption of the 1994-1995 regular budget, it had expressed its concerns about the meagre resources allocated to poverty-alleviation programmes. It was unfortunate that priority had been granted to peace-keeping operations and humanitarian assistance. Restructuring should be geared towards more effective promotion of economic and social development as a necessary condition for international peace and stability, to be realized through international economic cooperation under the Charter.

62. His delegation commended the Secretary-General on his report on the Office of Inspections and Investigations (A/49/449). The Office had made an excellent start, especially in view of the fact that the new functions entrusted to the Office's various divisions had been financed from within existing resources. Efforts had been made to improve programme performance reporting. In addition, for the first time, obsolete or redundant activities had been identified and proposals to terminate them had been made. He commended the Office's efforts to improve the efficiency of programmes in the social and economic sectors and in the vital area of human rights, despite the limited time and resources available in that field. He noted with satisfaction that steps were being taken to address problems of cooperation between the departments concerned.

63. Since its resources were not commensurate with its responsibilities, the Office of Inspections and Investigations should not establish the priorities of its programme of work solely on the basis of the amount of resources allocated to certain activities or their "visibility". Consideration must also be given to the intrinsic importance of programmes and the role they played in promoting international and regional cooperation in the area of economic and social development.

AGENDA ITEM 107: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995

Revised estimates under sections 3, 8 and 33: Africa: critical economic situation, recovery and development (A/C.5/48/74 and Add.1; A/48/7/Add.8)

64. Mr. TAKASU, introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the matter (A/C.5/48/74 and Add.1), said that in establishing the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, the General Assembly had created under that plan a new programme entitled "Africa: critical economic situation, recovery and development" (programme 45). Activities had been included in the 1992-1993 budget under that programme. The General Assembly had subsequently approved the establishment within the Secretariat of a separate, clearly identifiable division for Africa. During the 1992-1993 biennium, in the context of restructuring, the Secretary-General had reinforced the structure of the programme by setting up the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, which was part of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development.

65. In its resolution 48/228, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to consider the creation of a new budget section relating to the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. The report contained in document A/C.5/48/74 had been prepared in response to that request: in paragraph 5 of that report, the Secretary-General indicated that existing arrangements for programme 45 ensured clear identification of the New Agenda activities and resources in the United Nations programme budget and of those of the Office of the Special Coordinator within the Secretariat. Simultaneously, the integration of those arrangements under section 8 would, through the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, effectively ensure the orientation and coordination at a high level of activities implemented by the various Secretariat divisions concerned, the United Nations

Development Programme (UNDP) and other United Nations programmes, funds and bodies. The existing arrangements also provided for administrative flexibility in programme implementation by allowing redeployments under section 8 without the need for specific authorization by the Secretary-General. Accordingly, the Secretary-General felt that those arrangements should be maintained. The question could be addressed once again at a later time, when the programme underwent a comprehensive review by CPC in 1996.

66. After examining the report contained in document A/C.5/48/74, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 48/260 in which it requested the Secretary-General to prepare a draft programme budget section to include the activities mandated under programme 45 of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 and to submit it to the General Assembly by 10 July 1994 at the latest. Addendum 1 had been prepared in response to that resolution. It presented a draft new section (sect. 33) which included the activities already provided for under section 8 of the initial programme budget with the addition of funds resulting from the transfer from section 3 to section 8 of certain unutilized resources allocated to the elimination of apartheid. The funds requested totalled $3,530,900. The General Assembly now had two decisions to take. First, it should give its opinion on the question of the additional resources which the Secretary-General was proposing to transfer to the activities under consideration, which would possibly mean authorizing the Secretary-General to enter into commitments under section 8 not exceeding $428,500. Secondly, it would have to decide on the desirability of creating a new programme budget section covering those activities.

67. Mr. ETUKET (Uganda) retraced briefly the decisions taken by the General Assembly relating to Africa and drew attention to the reasons for those decisions. The General Assembly was concerned about the dispersal of activities for the development of Africa and of the proposed resources for them. Uganda therefore felt that the request to the Secretary-General to consider the creation of a new budget section relating to activities concerning Africa was a sound initiative. It would likewise support a Committee decision approving the funds requested by the Secretary-General. The main concern expressed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 5 of his report (A/C.5/48/74) was that, if the resources for programme 45 were to be included in a separate section, he would no longer have any latitude for redeploying funds within that section. His delegation had pointed out in previous statements that the Secretary-General had in some cases been able to effect similar redeployments, while noting that that was in fact one of the prerogatives of the General Assembly. It was not, therefore, a matter of whether or not it was possible to redeploy resources, but, rather, one of responding to the wishes expressed by the Assembly. Meanwhile, in its very latest decision, the Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to make additional resources available to support activities specifically related to the development and recovery of Africa. As ACABQ observed in paragraph 7 of its report (A/48/7/Add.8), the Secretary-General had not addressed all the requirements set out by the Assembly in its previous year's decision. His delegation therefore endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Secretary-General should report in detail on the manner in which he intended to implement, in particular, the provisions of resolution

48/228. Another question that had been raised was whether the addition of a new section in the programme budget would not be contrary to established procedures. In his view, if all activities relating to the development and recovery of Africa were grouped together, with the corresponding resources, that concern would be unwarranted. He consequently proposed that the Committee should approve the total amount of additional resources requested, namely $428,500, and that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to take fully into account the requirements set out by ACABQ in paragraph 6 of its report. He also hoped that the Secretary-General would be in a position to submit a full report to the Assembly at its resumed session, so that it could take a decision.

68. Mr. ELZIMAITY (Egypt) said he supported the proposal of the representative of Uganda concerning the additional resources requested and the report which the Secretary-General was invited to submit, taking account of the comments in paragraph 5 of the Advisory Committee's report.

69. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) said he was in favour of redeploying the resources initially allocated to the programme "Elimination of apartheid" and also advocated seeking the additional financial resources necessary for the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. Regarding the creation of a new section in the programme budget, he said that, as his delegation and other African delegations saw it, it was a matter of bringing all the resources appropriated for Africa together under a single section so that it could be seen how they were utilized, and so that African development problems could be addressed more effectively. The best way of examining the difficulties encountered by the Secretariat and finding a solution that would reconcile the concerns of the African delegations and those of the Secretariat would be to hold informal consultations on the subject.

70. Mr. DJACTA (Algeria) expressed concern about the conclusion in the Secretary-General's report to the effect that the existing arrangements would appear to be the most satisfactory and should be maintained. In the programme budget appropriation resolution for 1994-1995, the Secretary-General had been clearly requested to consider the creation of a new section. His delegation supported Uganda's proposals, especially concerning the submission of a report by the Secretary-General to apprise the Committee of all the programme implications.

71. Mr. MAIGA (Mali) said that his delegation was also concerned about maintaining the status quo. In his view, the Advisory Committee had given a good analysis of the question in paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 of its report, and, in resolution 48/228, the General Assembly had also given guidelines that might be helpful to the Secretary-General. Like previous delegations, his delegation was convinced that a new section must be added to the budget in order to avoid confusion in the Secretariat's activities relating to the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

72. Ms. SHEAROUSE (United States of America), referring to the proposed transfer of resources from section 3 to section 8, said that the transfer raised a small procedural difficulty. During the current session, certain priority

activities would require additional resources. Rather than proceeding in stages, it would be better to return to the matter at the end of the session, when all necessary information on the proposed additional expenditures as a whole would be available. Secondly, she supported the Secretary-General's recommendation to the effect that the proposed new section should not be introduced at the present stage. She did not see what advantage there would be in it from the point of view of programme content or from the administrative standpoint. Finally, she said that the comments made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 8 of its report had not been fully taken into account in document A/C.5/48/74/Add.1.

73. Mr. AMARI (Tunisia), Mr. OWADE (Kenya) and Mr. TUKURU (Nigeria) endorsed the views expressed by the representatives of Uganda and Morocco and supported their proposals.

74. Mr. KAZEMBE (Zambia) said that his delegation associated itself on the whole with what the representative of Uganda had said. If they were to have a real impact, the activities relating to Africa should be brought together within a single budget section. The Committee and the Secretary-General should be able to provide answers to the questions raised by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. Similarly, the recommendations contained in paragraph 12 of the report should be accepted and an evaluation made of the funds transferred from the programme on the elimination of apartheid to the programme concerning the development of Africa.

75. Mr. SHACKELL (United Kingdom) said that it would be preferable to wait for the Committee to have addressed all budgetary questions relating to the biennium 1994-1995 before settling the matter of the creation of a separate section on Africa.

76. Mr. ETUKET (Uganda) objected that, in some cases, resources were requested for budget sections without considering other priorities. There was not necessarily a link between the priority accorded to Africa and the other priorities, which his delegation obviously endorsed.

77. The CHAIRMAN suggested, in the light of the discussions, that the Committee should hold informal consultations to consider the decision to be taken in the matter.

78. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.